AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-70 (Canceled)

71.(New) An encoding apparatus comprising:

means for creating N items (where, N is a positive integer equal to or greater than 2) of encoded data from one received content; and

means for consolidating the N items of encoded data into at least one file as a single item of encoded data.

72.(New) An encoding apparatus comprising:

means for creating N items (where, N is a positive integer equal to or greater than 2) of encoded data from one received content;

means for merging the N items of encoded data on a frame basis; and

means for storing the N merged items of encoded data into at least one file as a single track.

73.(New) An encoding apparatus comprising:

means for creating N items (where, N is a positive integer equal to or greater than 2) of encoded data from one received content;

means for merging the N items of encoded data on a frame basis with the N items of encoded data shifted with each other by a predetermined length of time; and

means for storing the N merged items of encoded data into at least one file as a single track.

74.(New) The encoding apparatus as defined in claim 71,

further comprising means for encoding the content in such a way that the encoded data can be decoded even if the same part of the content is exchanged among the N items of encoded data on a per-encoding basis.

75.(New) An encoding apparatus comprising:

means for creating N items (where, N is a positive integer equal to or greater than 2) of encoded data, each of which has a different compression rate, from one received content;

means for merging the N items of encoded data on a frame basis with the N items of encoded data shifted with each other by a predetermined length of time; and

means for storing the N merged items of encoded data into at least one file as a single track.

76.(New) An encoding apparatus comprising:

means for creating N items (where, N is a positive integer equal to or greater than 2) of encoded data, each of which has a different compression rate, from one received content;

means for encoding the content in such a way that the encoded data can be decoded even if the same part of the content is exchanged among the N items of encoded data on a per-encoding basis;

means for merging the N items of encoded data on a frame basis with the N items of encoded data shifted with each other by a predetermined length of time; and

means for storing the N merged items of encoded data into at least one file as a single track.

77.(New) The encoding apparatus as defined in claims 71, further comprising means for adding an identifier of the same number to encoding units of the same part of the N items of encoded data as a header.

78.(New) An encoding apparatus comprising:

means for creating encoded data from a received content;

means for creating Forward Error Correction data from the encoded data; and

means for consolidating the encoded data and the Forward Error Correction data into at least one file as a single item of encoded data.

79.(New) An encoding apparatus comprising:

means for creating encoded data from a received content;

means for creating Forward Error Correction data from the encoded data;

means for merging the encoded data and the Forward Error Correction data on a frame basis with the encoded data and the Forward Error Correction data shifted with each other by a predetermined length of time; and

means for storing the merged encoded data and the Forward Error Correction data into at least one file as a single track.

80.(New) The encoding apparatus as defined in claim 78, wherein the Forward Error Correction data is FEC (Forward Error Correction) data.